

# The Appearing and Kingdom of the Lord Jesus

Acts 3: 19-21.

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Lecture 7 of "The Second Coming and Kingdom of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

As my subject tonight is the appearing and kingdom of the Lord Jesus, I have read these verses simply to establish, in a clear and concise form, the distinct proof that the appearing of the Lord Jesus is the introduction of His kingdom here below. I do not deny for a moment that there is such a thing as translation into "the kingdom of God's dear Son" now. We all agree in this. This therefore is not the question, but rather, whether Scripture does not certainly intimate that the Lord Jesus will, by His appearing, introduce His kingdom over the earth. Not merely will the kingdom be preached, and the word, mixed with faith in them that hear it, bring souls born of God to see and enter that kingdom morally (John 3), which no doubt is true now; but Scripture shows us also a change of immense importance for the world, which the appearing of the Lord Jesus will inaugurate. The apostle Peter, addressing the Jews, called upon them to "repent and be converted, that their sins might be blotted out, that times of refreshing" [I have ventured to change one word here: it is "so that," or "in order that" (not "when ") "times," etc., which is never the force of the conjunction in such a construction] "may come from the presence of the Lord; and He may send Him who was fore-appointed you, Christ Jesus," or, "your Messiah, Jesus" — I do not wish to enlarge on questions of a critical nature, but just give the true sense as we pass along — "whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken of by the mouth of His holy prophets since the world began."

Now what this passage proves, beyond just question, is this, that God will send the Lord Jesus, and that the sending of the Lord Jesus as the Messiah, according to that fore-appointment which every Jew looked for, will introduce, or at any rate will be simultaneous with, the times of refreshing, of which the prophets are so full. Meanwhile heaven receives Jesus until (not the destruction of the world; not the passing away finally of the heavens and earth; but, contrariwise) the restoration of all things, — the blotting out of the foul stains which cover this world, and the setting in order that which has been confused and dislocated by sin, the mighty power of God (which now works in the salvation of souls and in the blessing of saints by the testimony of His grace and truth in Christ) being then put forth after another sort: not merely in giving eternal life to souls — which will go on of course — but besides in righteous power putting down manifestly every influence, and every person too, that is opposed to the glory of God by the Lord Jesus. His judgment, we know, will first deal with the unseen — with Satan and his hosts; it will, in the next place, purge the earth of its destroyers (Rev. 11), or, as it is said, the Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall clear the field, which is the scene of His kingdom — the world - of all stumbling-blocks, and of them that do iniquity. For this unquestionably the saints in Old Testament times were taught by the Spirit to wait. The New Testament in not the smallest degree weakens such an expectation, but confirms it.

It is fully granted that in the New Testament we have higher hopes, which are fully brought to view now that the heavens are opened; that we behold Jesus at the right hand of God; that we see our own place and portion in communion with Christ there; for grace has given us to look to be with Him, our Head and Bridegroom, in the heavens. I confess that if it were a question of choosing between any earthly power and glory and that which the Holy Ghost now reveals with Christ above, it would be no matter of long deliberation or difficult choice to one. Unhesitatingly, I think, all our hearts ought to answer to such a call, and to say that (blessed as may be the power that will deal with the earth, that

will fill the world with the goodness of God, that will banish from it all things that corrupt, dishonour, and oppose the will of God here below,) the heavens are the infinitely higher scene, the only adequate sphere for the full expression of the Father's love to Christ, viewed not only as the eternal Son, but as the risen man, who has glorified God upon the earth in life, and above all in death. According to Scripture, (John 13-17) the only due answer to His glorifying of God in the cross, is heavenly glory. No one, therefore, can fairly object, I am persuaded, that there is any thought of, or even room left for, weakening the true place of Christ's highest glory on high, and the Church's proper blessing in union with its Head. In Ephesians 1: 3, we read, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." I assuredly believe, that the heavenly places, in contrast with Israel's blessing in the land of Palestine, show us the revealed and destined home of our blessing with Christ. It is not meant of course that we are actually there, but He is; and as surely as we are by the Holy Ghost made one with Christ while He is there, so will He come for us that He may introduce us, according to the fulness of His own grace, into that seat of His glory and of His affection for His Bride. We belong to Him, and we are conscious that we do. "In that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, ye in me, and I in you." That day has now arrived. The Holy Ghost, who has come down to dwell in us, is the Spirit of glory, as well as of God. Even as we know our Saviour in glory, and He is our life on the throne of God; so the Holy Ghost comes down from Him *thence* — not barely from Him while upon the earth, but from Him exalted in the heavens, — and unites us with Him there. And therefore it is but the complement of this astonishing unfolding of God's counsels in Christ, that He will come to present the Church glorious, without spot, wrinkle, or any such thing, but also to receive us unto Himself, that we may be with Him in the Father's house (which is certainly not the earth, but in the heavens); in short, that we may be like Him, and with Him where He is.

But how does this heavenly hope in anywise clash with the further fact that the name of the Lord is to be exalted in the earth, as it has never yet been? How does our blessing above negative that which the Holy Ghost kept before the minds of saints from the very beginning? Does He not take, therefore, special pains to reaffirm it at the very moment, *i.e.* after Pentecost, when man might have imagined the old expectations of the prophets were completely dead, and gone for ever.

Now there is a true sense in which old things are passed away. That is to say, we have now to do with a new sphere of such surpassing glory in Christ, as quite raises the Christian above man, the Jew, etc. Hence we must not blend past hopes with these new revelations as the proper phase of our blessing. Our relationship is really with one who was dead, and is risen and ascended into heaven, where, as has been remarked already, we belong to Him. We shall join Him in the air; we shall be with Him on high; but am I, therefore, to deny that the earth also is to be blessed? Do you not rejoice that His praise is to fill this lower scene? Is it not sweet to you that God should show Himself as good as He is? We do well to watch against every look of the evil eye — to hail Him who is always and only good. Will you not allow Him to exalt Christ in this world where He is now despised, where His name is so profaned, and where His truth is so tampered with, defaced, and corrupted? You will not have God to help the thought, neither will His word strengthen you in such an exclusion of the fixed purpose of God.

If ever a time was when the Holy Ghost wrought mightily in the power of divine grace, if ever there was a time when the saints of God on the earth were filled with a sense of His goodness and of that which Christ was to them, (I do not say for thorough intelligence, but for practical power,) it was at Pentecost. For great grace on all, there was nothing like the very hour in which Peter uttered these words. At that day, surely, if ever, it might have been thought that the seasons of refreshing were

come by the power of the Holy Ghost upon the earth, that times of restoring all things were then established morally by the gospel. Certainly, if blooming and abundant fruits in souls could account for such a feeling, there was peculiar excuse for it then. But this was the precise moment which the Holy Ghost seized by the apostle Peter to declare in the most emphatic manner that these times are still future; that a further mighty change needs to be wrought; that it is not to be effected by fresh or repeated missions of the Holy Ghost on Christians or for Christian purposes, but by sending Jesus — that Jesus who is gone away to heaven; and that, when He comes from heaven once more, then and not before shall be the times, not of the destruction of earth and heaven, but contrariwise of the restitution of all things of which God has spoken by His holy prophets since the world began. The testimony of the prophets, thus appealed to, ought to leave the meaning of this Scripture entirely unambiguous. It is not a question of New Testament declarations and hopes, but of that which was already written or spoken by the mouth of the prophets, "His holy prophets," it is said, "since the world began."

There can be no doubt therefore that the intention of this statement of the Holy Ghost by Peter was to let the Jews know that their repentance and conversion, that their sins might be blotted out as a nation, is an antecedent condition of the great revolution yet to take place for this world. When the heart of Israel *as Israel* is touched, when they turn to the Lord — it may be but tremblingly and with very partial understanding of His grace, but when it is a real work in their heart, God shall send Jesus from heaven. Our Lord Himself uttered similar truth in the close of Matthew 23, which passage was before us a short time ago. He left their house unto them desolate, "till" — not for ever, but "till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of Jehovah." When they so say, He is to come. Jehovah sends Him; for their hearts call Him "blessed" as He comes in Jehovah's name. This answers to their conversion in Acts 3. They judge themselves before God, acknowledge their sins, and find them blotted out by divine grace in the blood of their own Messiah. There is no other way; but oh, how unspeakably affecting for them above all men! But again, whatever may be the precious power of the blood of Christ, there is no real blessing to any soul at any time save through the judgment of sin — of self — in the conscience. And so we find in the case of Israel: it is strongly enforced upon them, however it may be of grace; for Jesus is a Saviour to give repentance to Israel and remission of sins. In Matthew the point is rather the heart turning to Christ. In the Acts of the Apostles it is rather the conscience clearing itself, as it were, or rather clearing God, — vindicating Him against themselves. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Such is the absolute principle flowing from God's nature, said of us, no doubt, but ever true. Both are united, and always, more or less, united; and when they are verified in Israel, God will send Jesus, their before-appointed Messiah, and then the times of restitution of all things will begin to run their blessed and blessing course upon the earth.

Nor is this, I need hardly say, a truth by any means confined to one isolated portion of the New Testament. But if this testimony stood alone, it seems to me amply sufficient to exclude as utterly groundless the notion that the times of universal restitution, and of refreshing too, can be brought in, according to Scripture, from any working of God's Spirit on the earth, without the mission of Jesus from heaven. Were it an effect of the presence and power of the Holy Ghost, it is clear that *then* these times of refreshing must have arrived. But arrived they were not, as the apostle Peter clearly intimates, when the Holy Ghost was thus producing the sweetest fruit of divine power and grace which ever grew among the saints on earth. He points for the true epoch to the coming of Jesus; he shows that Christ's presence is necessary, as the prophets also everywhere attest.

And is it not, I would urge, a righteous arrangement that so it should be? Does not this revealed

truth, like all others, commend itself to the spiritual mind? For who has not proved the harmony which exists between the instincts of hearts renewed by God's grace, and the precious testimony of God's word? It is not that any one could beforehand have gathered this truth from any feeling of his own; but the heart, once it is revealed and believed, bows to it, and confesses how wisely and well all has been ordered of God. On the one hand, then, here is God's own most positive declaration of His mind and will; on the other, do not our hearts feel that it is exactly what is due to the blessed name of the Lord Jesus? — that He who had the shame, who knew the sorrow, who has been and is so trifled with by men, should have the joy and the glory of introducing the blessed reversal of this world's sad and humbling history? After all, whatever may be the precious functions of the Spirit of God — and it is not for any one here to weaken them for a moment — there was but One who died for sin; there was but One who suffered for us, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God; there was but One who renounced all His rights here below, that God — Father, Son, and Holy Ghost — might be glorified in the place where sin had so long reigned in death to man and dishonour to God.

Most righteously therefore it is His coming, who will change all here below — that blessed One who on the cross made a righteous foundation for all blessing, not only for heaven to be filled with its new sons and heirs of glory, but for the earth at large to sing for joy; not only for the Church to sit down as bride at the marriage supper of the Lamb above, but for that nation also to find its sins, and rebellious evil, and hoary unbelief for ever washed away in His blood. He died for the children of God that were scattered abroad, He died to gather them together in one; but He died for that nation also, and I call your attention to it. It is not merely that He tasted death for every man; it is not merely that in bringing many sons unto glory, He, the leader of their salvation, was made perfect through sufferings. Are these, manifold as they are, all the applications of His everlastingly wondrous and fruitful death? Turn to Colossians 1, and hear what the Spirit of God there tells us of the power of His blood in reconciliation. We are more accustomed in general to think of our being reconciled to God; and surely it is a weighty truth, and of the utmost moment to His glory and our own peace and strength; but in Colossians 1 the Spirit of God, though giving to our personal portion its full place, breaks out into a larger circle of divine purposes; "for it pleased [the Father] that in him should all fulness dwell."

May I here remark, that it was to please, not merely the Father, but also the Son, and the Holy Ghost? It seems somewhat to lower the proper glory of these equally divine persons to restrict the good pleasure to the Father. Of course, if Scripture really said so, there would be an end of all questions; but it does not. For, as you will observe, the words, "*the Father,*" are inserted by men (as Tyndale, Cranmer, Beza, etc.). We are always at liberty, perhaps I might say we are bound, to examine whenever these insertions occur. They have no warrant of faith, though they may be a real help occasionally; but it is well to examine them as mere suggestions in the light of the rest of Scripture. In this case I think it certain that the true supplement is God (not Father), or, supplying no word, that the fulness of the Godhead was pleased to dwell in Christ. This, however, did not effect reconciliation. Incarnation is *not* reconciliation, though there are not wanting those who will tell you so; but such men either speak of what they do not understand, or they have no adequate sense of sin; that is, no true knowledge of God. The Son becoming incarnate is, no doubt, a marvellous display of grace on God's part towards man; but it does not, could not, put away sin. Nothing but the cross avails, nothing but the blood-shedding of the Son of God; and therefore there was a farther step necessary, not only that all the fulness of the Godhead should dwell in Him, but that there should be a work done by Him. And this work is reconciliation by His blood, as it is said, "Having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself."

It is not persons, but "*things*" — "all things unto himself:" by Him, whether the things on the earth or the things in the heavens. It is a most dangerous misunderstanding of Scripture to suppose that men are meant here. If they were in question, we ought all to be universalists, horribly false as that scheme is. No such delusion is taught here, or in any other part of God's word. It is the truth as regards things, the creatures of God's power. The reconciliation is destined to embrace all things He has made. Were there one object in heaven or earth (I speak not of rebellious angels, or of unbelieving man) outside the reach, the efficacious reach, of the blood of Christ, so far Satan would have won some triumph over God; he would have been just so far the conqueror of the woman's Seed, instead of the conquered. But reconciliation by blood more than meets the ruin. Nothing needed to be reconciled when God made all things good. It was simply creature goodness. As man its head was capable of sin and of death by sin, so was the lower creation liable to be dragged down into decay, or brought more or less under the power of death. And so it was, so it is. The creature is, as Romans 8 calls it, "made subject to vanity." But now the ransom is found, redemption's price is paid. The reconciling power is not yet applied; but the foundation of all is laid, and never to be laid again. The blood is shed: it is only a question of God's time for accomplishing His counsels, for the application of this power to all the creation that groans and travails still — to "all things, whether the things on the earth, or the things in the heavens."

Meanwhile, before God turns to this account the value of the blood of Christ, He brings in, not all persons, but, as He says here, "you." "You that were sometime alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now *hath* he reconciled." There it is applied to the Christian, even to the souls who now believe in the Lord Jesus Christ: God has reconciled them by the blood of His cross, which has made peace for them, instead of leaving them to make their peace with God. For He says, "Now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death:" not through His birth, nor through their baptism; not through His incarnation, but "in the body of his flesh through death;" and this because death alone, the death of Christ, gives God's holy judgment of sin in grace to the soul who believes. Infinite mercy that it should be so! The birth of Christ is just the introduction of the person who was to accomplish this truly divine work. It was the manifestation of Him who was God in human nature, which in Him was holy, though in it Adam fell, involving in his own ruin the race and all the creation of which he was chief; it was the manifestation of Him who, though a man, was none the less a Divine person. But now there is infinitely more; now in the body of His flesh, *through death*, He has effected our reconciliation. Had it not been so, even His manifestation in flesh must have been entirely fruitless for our deliverance. What a proof that in Him there was life without the smallest taint or smell of death! Nothing that was torn by beasts could be eaten, even according to the figures of the law; nothing that had a spot or blemish was capable of being made an offering for sin, even in type: how much more in the antitype! Yet He must die — the holy, harmless, undefiled. No otherwise could we have redemption, because in this way alone sin could be adequately judged — in death, the death of Jesus, the Son of God, and Son of man — in His death under divine judgment.

But Christ is dead. He has already poured out His soul unto death. Reconciliation, therefore, is made for every soul that now believes in Him. "You hath he reconciled." And this is the condition into which He brings us before God, "In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight." That is, the whole of our old being is regarded as to faith utterly gone under the judgment of the cross, and we are viewed according to our new nature, which nature we never see aright, save in the person of Christ. We are one with Him who is risen from the dead. There was no union when He was here upon earth before atonement. There was then seen one unbroken course of moral perfection in Christ; yea perfect Divine beauty; the expression of God Himself in all His ways here below. But the great question of sin with God was not settled; the greatest

work of all was not yet done. There was still the hour impending which He so solemnly looked onward to ever and anon, especially when the disciples were occupied with His present power, and the anticipations of His kingdom. He told them, and them expressly, that He was going to suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, etc., and be slain, and be raised on the third day. No wonder then when He did die and the victory was won, when He stood in resurrection — in the power of this new and abundant life to bestow it on the guiltiest of sinners, that the Holy Ghost makes much of it! Do we? It is a serious question, be assured. Remember, it is not a matter only for today, but for ever. Remember that it is not a truth merely about our own souls, nor even about salvation; it is a truth about Christ, by whose death and resurrection God brings us into this astonishing place, "To present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight." It is not in our sight; for meet it is that we should know ourselves full of evil, judging, both in roots and fruits, the old man in us. We know painfully as a fact, of course, that the old man is there; but the comfort of faith is, that sin is judged in Christ; and it is well to bear in mind that, if it be not judged now, it never can be. If we who believe are not thus reconciled now, when or how are we to be? If we are, how blessed are we! Of course, we are not supposing souls which are still outside Christ; but I say, that for those who have looked to Christ, the work is perfectly done — not merely *doing*, but done — so that God Himself could not add to its efficacy. The atoning work *is* done; the reconciliation is accomplished "in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight." What infinite grace, to give us the knowledge of it now by faith, before the result appears at Christ's coming! Still there remains the other truth, that the precious blood of Christ includes, in point of title, the reconciliation of all things, whether in the earth or in the heavens.

Nor does the proof depend upon this Scripture alone, though a single Scripture, if direct, is better than all other demonstration, and more than enough to hang heaven and earth upon. I dare not praise, but rather deprecate the habit of not being content with one Scripture, were there but one. If there be Scripture, it is God's voice, God's truth: what else is needed? He who does not believe one plain text, would not believe a thousand. But the truth is that Scripture is full of proofs of Christ's appearing to bring in His kingdom over the earth. Of these I can only present a few tonight.

In Ephesians 1 is a passage as striking as it is in point. We are told there that God "has abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence" — toward the saints now. That is, He has not merely conferred on us a measure of creature ability to know and name certain things, as He gave to Adam when each creature came before him, as the appointed lord of creation, to assign its just name. But now to the saints, in virtue of the Second Man, the last Adam, God abounds in all wisdom and prudence. The whole expanse of God's counsels is spread before the Church now. How can these things be? It is because *Christ is* the object — because He, the Son of God, has been revealed; and what are all things compared with Him and His work? Counted as the small dust of the balance. No wonder then, if God have given us Him, if He have united us with Him, that He should tell us all the secrets of the glory He designs to display for Him — all He means to do with everything in heaven and earth for Christ. What, then, is the hope of this boundless scheme for glorifying Christ? God, we are told, has made known unto us the mystery of His will — that secret that was kept hidden in other times, — "according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself, that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one *all* things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth" — literally, the things in the heavens, and the things upon the earth — "even in him, in whom also we have obtained an inheritance." In this we have a still larger compass than we saw in the Colossians. For, beside the "things in the heavens and the things on the earth" in both, we have here the further intimation that we have obtained an inheritance in Him over all things. So He tells us, a little lower down in the same chapter, God has made Christ to be "the head over all things to

the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."

But mark the expression in ver. 10: the administration of the fulness of times is committed to Christ. God has purposed in Himself, with a view to or against this administration of the fulness of times, that He will gather all things in one under Christ — that He will put all things heavenly and earthly under His headship, as the risen and glorified man. What a truth! The whole universe of God under man — no doubt in Christ; but man! What a day that will be, and what a state of things! What joy and brightness when a king shall not merely reign in righteousness in a particular land, but when the whole creation of God, rescued from the usurper and from all the sad effects of the fall, will be under the only man capable of using all and governing all for God — capable, too, of filling it with every element of blessing, and upholding it to the glory of God. In that day Christ will accomplish this. He has undertaken this purpose of God, and will bring glory to Him as truly in this scene of government, as already in grace, when He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. He was once offered to bear the sins of many, and perfectly glorified God as to sin. Yet outward appearances, we know, disclose nothing of the kind. Seemingly sin prevails, and Christ is but the rejected man; but faith knows that the only victory which cost God anything (and it cost Him everything) is won. But what joy when it will not merely be an unseen truth known to the soul, but when every whit of God's creation will proclaim that Christ is exalted over all things! We too shall be there: we shall be with Him. It could not be but that this must be a joy to us: it could not be that a believing soul would despise such glory and bliss, or think lightly of it when it is presented to the heart in the word of God. But surely it will be to us even deeper joy that Christ will be over all things to the glory of God, — though we shall be the nearest and most intimate object of His love, His bride in association with Him as Head over all things that God has made — deeper still to be with Him where He is, that we may behold His glory, loved as He was of the Father before the foundation of the world. (John 17)

Through this Scripture then we are permitted to contemplate by faith the scene of immeasurable blessing; which not the departure but the appearing of Christ in glory is to introduce and establish. This we have seen already; but I will cite some few additional proofs which may make it thoroughly plain to those who are little versed in Scripture. Let us take, for instance, Titus 2: 11-13; for I wish to show that the epistles prove this truth quite independently of the prophetic Scriptures, against which some harbour an unwarrantable and most ignorant prejudice. Now the doctrinal epistles teach no otherwise. "The grace of God," says the apostle, "that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men." This has already taken place, we all know: the all-saving grace of God has appeared wherever the gospel is proclaimed, "teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." But is this all? Is there no portion in hope for us? Is there no expectation which is the proper answer to, and product or at least companion of the grace of God? The authorized version adds — "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." For one phrase here I must be allowed to substitute, "the appearing of the glory." There is no doubt that this is the true meaning. Too much rein has been given to these loose renderings because of imaginary Hebraisms, which fritter away the true force. Hence, competent translators take it (in contrast with the appearing of grace,) as "the appearing of the glory." The *grace* of God has already appeared: the *glory* of God is going to appear; and this is what we look for, *i.e.* more accurately and fully, "the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ." And where is His glory to appear? In the same scene where the saving grace of God has appeared. It is not a statement of our anticipated removal into heavenly glory, certainly not this only, but that His glory shall appear.

Take another passage in 2 Timothy 4: "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom." Here we have the

same phrase as in the subject of this lecture, and in the same order — the appearing of the Lord and His kingdom. It is not the kingdom as simply known to faith, such as we know now. Christ has disappeared from the earth; and we know the kingdom of heaven in a mysterious form. (Matt. 13) It is His kingdom in a way unexampled, unknown, and even unthought of. But here we have the converse truth. It is the appearing of Jesus once more. The judgment of quick and dead is not put after His appearing and kingdom, but at that time, whether we adopt the critical text or adhere to the one vulgarly received. It is most evident that the Lord's judging quick and dead connects itself with both; even as from Rev. 19, 20, it is plain that the quick are judged at the beginning of His kingdom and throughout its course, the dead at the end. Will a believer dispute this? Can you affirm that it is not the meaning of the Scripture? What other meaning is carried in these words as simply and clearly as the one just expressed? There is no desire to weaken in the least degree any truth as to the kingdom of God as it now subsists. It is agreed on all sides that, for the present, Christ has gone up to God's right hand in the heavens, and that we have the kingdom of heaven in its actual form of mystery, not manifestation, wherein tares are mingled with wheat, and a continual war is waging between good and evil, where Satan is not bound, but active as the serpent and the lion, and the Holy Ghost makes good the power of Christ only to faith: a state of things characterised by a vast profession without conscience or feeling toward God the Father, most of all by its dishonouring the Lord Jesus, and by hindering, slighting, grieving, quenching, and denying the Holy Ghost. All this I admit. But here the apostle charges his spiritual right-hand Timothy, "before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at [or, both by] his appearing and his kingdom." Is it not a wholly different state of things? Is Christ judging the quick and the dead now? Clearly not, but the contrary: He is *saving* those that are dead in sins, quickening them with His own life. He is carrying on a judgment among those that are spiritually alive now, if you will, but it is another state of things altogether — a practical, present dealing with the ways of His disciples, that they may not be condemned by and by with the world. Here it is the positive application of judicial power at His appearing, when He comes in His kingdom - His visible kingdom in power and glory. These points are sufficiently defined here, and the state of things affirmed and manifest; for His appearing and His kingdom are in the closest association, both with each other and with His judgment of living and dead. But it is not at all "the end" of 1 Cor. 15; for there He gives up the kingdom, instead of appearing and setting it up. When the new heavens and the new earth are brought in, nay, when the old heavens and old earth pass away, there is no hint of Christ's appearing or His kingdom. Indeed, common as it may be, it is an absurdity to insert the appearing of Jesus then. For to whom could He appear, when all things are dead and gone, dissolved, and vanished away? Never is it so presented in Scripture. What is affirmed in the word of God as to all this, I hope soon to lay before you as perspicuously as I can, when the subject of "the Judgment and the Eternal State" will come more definitely before us. But it is not an uncalled-for anticipation, if I now remark how manifestly the appearing of the Lord Jesus introduces His kingdom in a distinct and visible character of judgment; whereas now, on the contrary, He is invisible, and His dealing with the world is only grace, in the testimony of the gospel, if they might hear and be saved. But as He once appeared in this world to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, so He will appear a second time, and this not merely for salvation to those who thus look for Him, but for the judgment of men at large, whether quick or dead. This will be His appearing and His kingdom in their true import, order, and time.

No doubt, preconceived views and traditions of men make this a great difficulty to some Christians. It may be desirable therefore to remove, if possible, some of their chief difficulties. The future kingdom of Christ visibly established over the earth seems to many conscientious souls a step backward. The more you maintain the exceeding blessedness of the Church now, and that form in

which the kingdom of Christ is actually known by faith, the more you do violence to their most cherished thoughts and expectations. They look for the stability of that which now is, yea, for its progress. But that seems a going back. They turn our own weapons against us; they ask whether Christians have not now in this world the Lord Jesus Christ known in the most blessed manner? Has not the Spirit of God been poured out personally and in power, so that the believer may walk by faith in the deep joy of an unseen Saviour? Are we not then, they argue, contending for an inferior order of things, for another age to succeed the present, in which sight will take the place of faith, and every natural good will abound to the people of God, and it will be simply power governing righteously, instead of the Holy Ghost strengthening the saints unto patience and the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, in the knowledge of Himself and the power of His resurrection? Are we not then, they say, pleading for a retrograde movement — a going back, instead of forward, according to the usual principle of God's ways? The answer is plain and conclusive, as the difficulty is only owing to a contracted view of the subject, i.e. to ignorance. Let us seek to look a little more largely and deeply at the manner in which God has wrought upon the earth; and it will soon be seen that the very objection against the truth which has passed before us this night turns, as is so often the case, into a positive argument in its favour.

What has been witnessed in this world? Before Christ's coming Israel was under law; but Israel disobeyed, Israel was broken up and dispersed, because they were guilty of rebellion and idolatry, as they were also of refusing and crucifying their own Messiah. It is plain that nothing could be more miserable — no ruin more complete. Then, after the cross comes another thing. The rejected Messiah takes His place in heaven, head of a new glory, after a manner quite unexpected, not according to Old Testament expectations. I do not mean the bare fact of His going to heaven; nor simply of His taking His seat at the right hand of God; for these things were predicted in the Psalms. Neither do I refer to the bare fact of blessing the Gentiles with His people; nor even to the Gentile call when the Jews were rejected; for the prophets without doubt were not silent on these great particulars. But I mean Christ's becoming the head of a body in heaven, and His abiding there; so that the Holy Ghost should be sent down to form men out of Jews and Gentiles into union with Himself and with each other, so making one new man, the Church, the body of Christ, while at the right hand of God. All this, I say, is the mystery that was entirely hidden in the Old Testament times, and only revealed now to His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. But if we turn our eyes to the Church upon the earth, what witness of a calling so high and glorious do we find now? Alas! the same tale as Israel told before of sin, rebellion, and idolatry; no less dishonour put upon Jesus, no less persistent resistance of the Holy Ghost. And if God spared not the natural branches of the olive tree, will He for ever refrain from cutting off the wild-olive Gentile that He was pleased to graft in? Assuredly He will not sanction the iniquity of Christendom, but judge it yet more sternly. He who abandoned Shiloh, He who profaned His own house in Jerusalem, winks not at all that He beholds now done, under the name of Christ, in every land under heaven. Indeed, He lingered long with Israel, pitying them, lifting them up, and warning them; but still He was there finally as a judge of His people, and in the very Cherubim of glory in the book of Ezekiel was that which told of the wrath that fell upon the people when His glory departed from them for a season. So with Christendom, whatever may be the long-suffering grace of God. I do not doubt there is this difference in Christendom, that the Holy Ghost being sent down to abide with us for ever, never under any circumstances leaves the children of God in this world, any more than He abandons utterly any individual who really belongs to God in this age. Yet, weighing in the light of His word the past and present state of Christendom, I cannot conceive a more heinous insult to His goodness and His holy nature and character, than the notion that He looks with approbation upon the sinful, distracted, anomalous condition of that which bears the name of Christ upon the earth. I do

not doubt for a moment His mercy, spite of all around, His faithfulness in blessing the word, the sure dwelling of the Holy Ghost in the believer and the Church: yet, for all this and more, Christendom's history is the history of foul sin, sorrow before unknown, burning shame, constant dishonour against the Lord.

And how stands in these respects the future age? how "the world to come," whereof we speak? The Lord Jesus comes; and at once — in a moment — those who wait for Him, the faithful in the past and in Christendom, are caught up to be with Him, glorified and translated to heaven. Is not this progress? Is it not a most precious step in advance that the Church, failing, scattered, degraded, and never so much as now, should be thus taken out of the scene of her sins and follies, and be with Christ Jesus for ever in glory? And when He is manifest in that glory, and we shall be manifested in glory along with Him, is this, I would ask in my turn, is this a retrograde step for the Church? Who would not allow that it is the precise contrary? Take again another look. He comes, and all the saints with Him. Forthwith the countless and proud enemies of Israel are overwhelmed and destroyed; the poor trembling Jews are delivered as from the jaws of the lion; the proud chivalry of Western Europe, alas! apostate with the mass of the Jews, perish in their rebellion against the Lord of lords, and King of kings. The mighty one from his fastness in the north comes, hoping to take advantage of that "peeled" people, and so seize the holy and long-coveted land of Israel, not believing any more in the glory of God to be manifested in Jerusalem, than men believe in the grace of God now; but he, too, and all his company, are humbled and broken for ever. The Lord Jesus destroys all His enemies, inward and outward, near and afar off, down to the last enemy, not merely of the Jews, but of Israel as a whole. The Assyrian is overthrown. Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, the great north-eastern antagonist of Israel in that day, may still remain for a brief space. After the awful judgment of the Western powers, judged still more awfully under the beast and the false prophet, the Lord Jesus will discomfit all the nations, His foes; He will deliver and exalt His people, sanctifying the name of Jehovah in both. He will not only bless Israel, but make them an eternal blessing in the earth. If this be not progress for Israel, what is progress?

And therefore it is that, so far from the administration of the fulness of times (Ephesians 1: 10) being an act of retrogression in the ways of God, it is the most real and manifest progress, if anything can be so viewed. But then you must beware of comparing the heavenly body of the Church in its calling with the earthly people of Israel. This has been the source of the mistake. Compare Israel in the past or present with Israel under Messiah and the new Covenant, and then say whether this be retrogression or advance. Take in the fulness of times; view the fulfilment of the entire sweep of the divine purposes; look upon the gathering of all things in heaven and in earth, under the headship of the Lord Jesus, and then you will have the truth simply, but you will have it also gloriously; for then Christ will be the manifest head over all things to the Church, glorious with Him, and, like Him, the sharer of all He has in that day. Even now, wondrous grace! He is not ashamed to call us brethren. Do you think it is to speak too boldly or irreverently, if I say that He will have no reason to be ashamed of His Church then? Will not the Church be the reflection of His own beauty and glory; all of it the fruit of divine grace to us? How could He be ashamed of His own likeness, then? I ask once more, will this be progress for the Church? Again, when Israel is no longer stiff-necked and self-confident, boasting about the law, and really and ever breaking it; when the law is written upon their hearts; when they possess all the blessings of the new covenant; when they bow before their own Messiah, no longer despised and spit upon, but received, adored, reigning over them and their land — will not this be progress for Israel? Most assuredly and emphatically.

Again, when the heavens are no longer arrayed against the earth, because of the pollutions and

rebelliousness of this lower scene; when the prince of the power of the air falls, who with his angels makes the heaven to be the chief seat of his plans and efforts to delude and destroy the world, as well as to accuse the saints of God; when all these higher places are cleared of the foe, and Jehovah hears the heavens, and the heavens (instead of turning a deaf ear to the bad and bold world below) shall hear the earth, and the earth shall hear the corn and the wine and the oil, and they shall hear Jezreel, who shall then be sown and bear fruits, instead of being as now vainly scattered by every wind that blows will not this be progress? And when land or water shall know neither scorching heat nor devastating tempest, when the fruits of the earth shall be no more visited by drought or mildew, by palmer-worm, locust, canker-worm, or caterpillar, when (save as a special curse for contempt of God) the four sore plagues shall be no more, and health, peace, and plenty shall be everywhere, and the harvest never perishes, and the herds are no more perplexed nor the flocks made desolate, and the beasts groan and cry no more; but contrariwise the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed, and the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose: for water shall break out there, and the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water, and grass with reeds and rushes shall be where dragons lay, and a way of holiness shall be there, an unerring way for the feeblest, and neither unclean man nor ravenous beast shall be there; but the wolf shall dwell with the lamb and the leopard with the kid, and the calf and young lion and fatling shall be there led of a little child; and cow and bear shall feed, their young lying down together, and the lion eat straw like an ox, and the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child put his hand on the cockatrice' den, nor hurt nor destruction be on all God's holy mountain: — will this be progress, or will it not? Manifestly, whether we look at the heavens, the earth or sea, at the Church above, at Israel or the Gentiles below, or even at the lower creation, it is triumphant progress in every sphere and every object, and it is all through Christ, all through His blood, all to His glory and God's glory by Him. If the lack of seeing progress in the millennium has deterred you, if you have hesitated about Christ's appearing and kingdom lest it might be a step backward in God's ways, blame yourself for your ignorance; beware of the false teachers who so misled you; commit yourself henceforth more simply and fearlessly to God and His word, the only source and standard of truth.

Let me appeal to your conscience, you who accept the truth here insisted on: does it in very deed lower your thoughts of Christ's appearing? does it make you more earthly-minded to believe the kingdom of God shall be thus visibly introduced at the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ? Surely you feel, on the contrary, that it fills a void in the future as nothing else can, gives meaning to a vast field of otherwise misunderstood Scripture, and vindicates the goodness, and power, and purposes of God in Christ with manifest triumph.

But there is another remark to be made, in the hope of somewhat clearing the subject. Not only does the Church of God differ essentially in its calling, in its worship, in its present standing, and in its future hopes, from that which existed even for the saints in Old Testament times; but the millennial age, the day of the appearing and kingdom of Christ, will differ quite as really and strikingly from that which is going on now. Among not a few proofs, one plain illustration may suffice. Let me first, however, point out a few remarkable points of contrast by the way. When Satan is no longer free to tempt men, when the power of God will be put forth to bless men, when all creation is delivered from the thralldom in which it now groans, when the earth no longer travails in pain but rejoices, when all that has breath here below will hymn the praise of the Lord Jesus, surely, as we cannot but feel and own, it will be an immense change for good. The men then alive on earth will answer to it, of course. Such a revolution must affect their conduct, as well as their minds and hearts, whether they be of

Israel or of the nations in that day. There will be no longer room for the mighty working of God's Spirit in the midst of sufferings, and faith, and patience as now. Not that there will not be divine knowledge; not that there will not be faith in God, and an intelligence of His mind suited to all that then subsists when glory dwells in the land of Palestine, and the nations gather around that chosen centre. Surely there will be rich and harmonious blessing, and the blessed Spirit, who groans with us in our sorrows, will not absent Himself from their bliss and joy and the affections and ways accordant with it all. But the change will be to us incalculable.

Now Ezekiel brings before us certain points of it in a very unmistakable way. We are told there what will be the destiny of Israel, who are, of course, in the foreground, because they will be the pivot of blessing and glory for the earth, as it were, around the Lord, viewed as reigning in their midst, but also, of course, in a glory that embraces all the earth. But when that day comes, Israel — the favoured people among the nations, then the head instead of being, as so long, the tail — cannot possess that profound acquaintance with God's grace and counsels in general which ought to be possessed by the believer now, who enters into that within the veil, and has the mind of Christ. In that day, although the sins of Israel will be as truly forgiven as ours, although they will rest upon Christ as really as any souls do now; yet there will not be the same communion, character, or measure in the power of the Spirit formed by the knowledge of Christ. In that day Christ Himself will (not have renounced His heavenly titles, of course, but also) have taken His earthly glory; and it will be in earthly places, not heavenly, that they will know Him, and be blessed by Him. This makes an all-important difference.

Accordingly, although the Spirit of God will be then poured out upon all flesh, we never hear of such a thing as His being sent in the personal manner in which we know Him present now. We must distinguish between the pouring out of God's Spirit, mighty and gracious an effect of divine power as it is, and the Holy Ghost personally sent down to dwell in believers. Never was there a time, never a divine dealing, in which the Holy Ghost was not active. On the day of Pentecost these two things have to be noted: the outpouring of the Spirit in power and grace, and also His presence after a special and personal sort as sent down from heaven. This he'd never been before; nor is there any ground known to me in Scripture to expect it again. There were not merely signs, wonders, tongues, healings, and miraculous powers of every kind, the samples of that energy which will fill and control the world to come, and so called the powers of that world in Hebrews 6; but there was a privilege incomparably higher than these — the gift of the Spirit to dwell in us personally according to the words of our Saviour. Now, the Holy Ghost will be poured out upon all flesh in the millennium; but it is nowhere written, and therefore not to be believed, that He will take up His personal dwelling-place in Israel, much less in any other nation, then. God will, no doubt, dwell in the midst of His people, but it will be in the way of governmental blessing — a very distinct thing indeed. There will be no such result, therefore, for instance, as Jews and Gentiles formed into one body in that day. All Scripture that treats of the millennium distinguishes between the Jews and the Gentiles then on earth, however they may be blessed or associated for God's glory.

Along with this may be next mentioned the fact which gives, to my mind, the strongest conceivable exemplification of the difference. Ezekiel lets us know, when that day comes, what is to be the allotted portion of each of the tribes of Israel when restored to their land. All is mapped out beforehand. We can even now say with certainty and distinctness that Judah will be here — Dan and Gad will be there and there. It could not be clearer if we looked upon the scene after it was all accomplished. Indeed, I do believe that it is better, if I may be allowed so to say, to see by faith, *i.e.* with God's eyes, than with our own. This the believer is entitled to now. The word of God is distinct, and given that we may believe, not wait like the world till it is a fact. But there is much more. In that

day a fresh ceremonial of divine worship is prescribed to Israel. Not only will they inherit a new division of the land, different from any arrangement that has yet been within Israel's experience; but, further, the ordinances of their worship will be altered in most important and significant respects. Thus the feast of Passover will be renewed, as also the feast of Tabernacles; and it is certain, from Zech. 14, that all the families of the earth will be summoned to worship the King, Jehovah of hosts, at the feast of Tabernacles. But it is a most noteworthy fact that there will be no feast of weeks then. There is the great feast of the first month, there is also the great feast of the seventh month; how comes it that there is nothing that answers to Pentecost? The omission seems to me to denote how completely it had been realized in the highest sense in the Church, which, as it were, had monopolized it. That heavenly body had come in between the true Passover, and before the verification of the Tabernacles, and had, so to speak, absorbed Pentecost to itself. The Spirit of God had come down in person and taken His place in the Church as He never will again, whatever effusion there may be once more. The fact assuredly is that Pentecost is not rehearsed when the day of glory dawns on the earth. There will be the renewal of the feast of the Passover, because at all times and in every dispensation there is no foundation of blessing but through the sacrifice of Christ. The feast of Tabernacles, again, we can see from Zechariah 14, is characteristic of that day, and then, of course, emphatically is kept a feast in special harmony with the millennium. All men will be keeping the feast of Tabernacles as a kind of witness and thanksgiving for that glory which will be then displayed. But all this makes the absence of the feast of weeks the more striking. Who but God Himself could have thought of such an omission as that of Pentecost six centuries before it was realized so unexpectedly after the ascension? Let me in particular ask you who will have Ezekiel to be spiritually fulfilled in the Church, what you have to- say as to this. Can you account for such a fact? If you were right in your theory that the prophecy of Ezekiel finds its due significance and answer in the Church, Pentecost, it is evident, ought to have been the special feast. Instead of this there is no Pentecost at all. Your speculations, therefore, are entirely baseless. The instance specified furnishes clear, simple, unambiguous evidence, which none but God Himself could have provided beforehand, that prophecy contemplates another course and character of things altogether from anything past, and especially from what exists at present. For we know that the Church of God begins with that which is here purposely left out. Then "the day of Pentecost was fully come." Then the believers came together and received the gift of the Holy Ghost, not merely gifts, though it was also true of them. But when the new age comes for this world, the truth of Pentecost, in its highest meaning disappears. There is no longer the personal mission and presence of the Spirit, though an outpouring there may be more than now.

Again, take notice that, according to the book of Ezekiel, the veil is not rent, but still supposed to exist; holy places are once more recognised, and a priesthood on earth, with the various accompaniments of such a sanctuary and such an order. Thus another character of things altogether is seen. In Christianity all this has disappeared. Why? Because we are brought to God by the knowledge He has given us of Christ's sacrifice in His sight. He has made known to us His own heavenly estimate of it. A heavenly High Priest is associated with those who can go into the holiest. The consequence is that all earthly priesthood completely vanishes; for now the truth is that every Christian is thereby constituted a priest. Who can deny these differences? Scripture is decisive, and the wisdom of God becomes apparent in all. Men may theorise and talk about unchangeableness; they may try to reason facts away; but there the facts are, and God has written all for our instruction. The only priests now upon the earth are Christians. We have a priest, a great High Priest, in heaven; the only other kind of priesthood is that of all Christians. In the millennium it will not be so. There will be again a Davidical prince and a holy people; there will be again a temple; there will be sacrifices; there will be living earthly priests, sons of Zadok; there will be certain suited feasts of Jehovah; there will be once more

the veil. Now, on the contrary, all these are done away in Christ; and so true is this, that as the veil of the temple was rent for us at the cross, so we are given to look habitually by faith on Christ with unveiled face; "*we all*" behold Him thus, as it is emphatically stated in 2 Cor. 3. It is not a question of arriving at a special degree of power or privilege; but the common privilege of all Christians, in contrast with Israel of old, and far beyond the passing favour shown even to Moses. "We all, with open (*i.e.* unveiled) face, beholding ["as in a glass," is a blundering addition founded on etymology] the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord (or, by the Lord the Spirit)." In the millennium nothing of the kind will be realized even by Israel. The most favoured nation of the earth, the Jews, will still be put, as it were, comparatively at a distance. For this is necessarily the consequence of the earthly temple, priesthood, and ordinances. There will not then be the nearness in relationship and worship enjoyed by Christians now.

On the other hand, the Church which has so intimately known Christ in heaven while itself upon earth, will never lose that sweet fellowship in heaven. Hence we see the notable fact that in the new Jerusalem there is no temple, which, we know, is so prominent in the earthly city, dignified as it may be; for its name from that day shall be Jehovah-Shammah, "the Lord is there." Assuredly He who is there will justify the glorious name, and prove that it is no mean blessedness for a people to have Jehovah for their God. Still it is earthly, not heavenly; and the glory of the celestial is one, that of the terrestrial is another even as there are celestial bodies and bodies terrestrial. Men may object, and imagine, and reason. They may disbelieve it, but cannot truthfully deny that such is the clear statement of Ezekiel in contrast with the New Testament and its special hopes. Never has either land or people, priesthood or sanctuary, answered to the prophet's description. Faith, therefore, assures itself that every word must yet be accomplished, but for earth, not heaven, for the Jew, not the Christian. Herod's temple in nothing corresponded to the temple of Ezekiel; any more than the state of Palestine or the Jews under Roman rule was like that which appears in the prophecy. All awaits the day when Christ shall appear and set up His kingdom. "And Jehovah shall be King over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Jehovah, and his name one."

The grand point to seize is the union, without confusion, of heaven, earth, and all things in them, under the Lord Jesus displayed in visible glory. The early Chiliasts wrongly dwelt on the earthly things of the kingdom; the moderns have been in general disposed to look only at the heavenly things. The truth which God is now reviving from His word is the united system in which heaven and earth, so long severed, are bound together under the last Adam and His heavenly Eve, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. To many this presents an idea which revolts them; but I fear its source is thoroughly infidel — the reasoning from present experience so as to reject the plainest testimony of Scripture. Eph. 1: 10, Col. 1: 20, are most decisive, and above all exception as being imbedded within the highest unfoldings of Christian doctrine which the New Testament contains. But in truth they are found almost everywhere, in one form or another. Thus the Transfiguration in the three earlier gospels presents the clearest view of this most harmonious blending of the earthly with the heavenly, of men in natural bodies with those already risen and changed, and Christ the acknowledged chief and centre of the scene; and this is the more to be heeded, because 2 Peter 1: 16, 17 treats it as a sort of sample of the kingdom. "For we have not followed cunningly-devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Nor is the gospel of John silent. Not only does John 3: 12 attest the "earthly" and the "heavenly" things of the kingdom of God, but the same principle alone explains John 17: 22, 23. "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one:

and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." Expressly this is the time of glory, ours in title now, but by and by to be so displayed that the world shall *know* (not "believe," but "know") that the Father sent the Son, and loved the saints after the same wondrous love. This is not the present state of things in which nothing of the kind is exhibited to or known by the world; neither can it be the eternal state when there will be no world to know it, even if it were the aim then and thus to make it known. The accomplishment of the Saviour's words can only, therefore, be in a condition which essentially differs from the present state and from eternity; and this, it is evident, can only be the millennial kingdom, with its heavenly glory an object of knowledge to the world below, and a spring of unceasing praise and glory to God.

No wonder that the Apocalypse sets its seal to the same precious truth; but such will be found to be the fact in Rev. 20, where judgment is given to the risen saints, who shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years: a reign which, as it is not begun yet, so it is inconsistent with what is revealed of eternity. The only time that intervenes is the millennium, which follows the advent of Christ in Rev. 19, but precedes the resurrection of the rest of the dead, the wicked dead) to judgment in the close of Rev. 20. But this is not all; for Rev. 21, after giving a complete picture of eternity in verses 1- 8, opens from verse 9 a retrospective vision of the millennial state, and presents to our view the glorified bride of the Lamb under the symbol of the holy city Jerusalem that descends out of heaven from God, in the light of which the nations walk, and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and homage unto (not "into") it. What more evident than that here we have the symbolic representation of the same truth we saw in John 17: 22, 23? For the world, the nations of the earth and their kings, cannot but see in these glorified saints the fullest witness that they share the glory of Jesus, and that they are loved of the Father as Christ was. No such sight can be as things now are; neither does it suit eternity, when nations and kings of the earth have for ever passed away. The millennium alone exactly meets the case, when heavenly and earthly things are thus seen in glorious accord.

But, in fact, though in various degrees of strength and clearness, the same truth appears throughout the Scriptures. For if the earnest expectation of the creation is waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God (Rom. 8: 19), which can only be when Christ at His coming has raised them up and at His appearing has displayed them, this again can only be the millennial era. For then creation, as all the prophets bear witness, shall be set free and sing for joy, instead of being dissolved in order to form the new heavens and earth, which will characterize the eternal state. When those who now have the firstfruits of the Spirit are no longer groaning but revealed in glory, creation will be not destroyed, but delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the sons of God. This is clearly the millennial day of gladness; not the passing away of the creation, when God shall make all things new for the final state. Then again 1 Cor. 6: 2, 3 is most explicit; for what would be the sense of the saints judging the world or angels in eternity? Take it of the millennium, and all is plain; it is just one of the peculiar features which distinguish that day from the present on one side, and from eternity on the other. Again, Phil. 2: 10, is plain; for though our Lord be exalted now, yet it is not yet the period when, in virtue of the name of Jesus, every knee bows, of heavenly and earthly and infernal beings — when every tongue confesses that He is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. As this is manifestly not yet the fact, so neither does it harmonize with the eternal state as it does with the intervening millennium. For the point is man thus exalted, and every creature compelled to own him Lord, if it do not bow, as we do by grace with hearty good-will. Now, the grand truth of eternity will be *God* all in all; not the special glorification of man in the person of our Lord Jesus.

Hebrews 2: 5-8 may close with its unmistakable voice these New Testament witnesses, and the more so as it links them on to the Old Testament, which is the distinctive character indeed of the epistle. It is not only that we are here told of the subjection to Christ of the habitable earth to come (τὴν οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσαν), which can only apply as a fact to the millennial era; but Psalm 8 is cited to prove the putting of *all things* in subjection under His feet. And so absolutely does this embrace the entire creation, heavenly and earthly, that 1 Cor. 15, citing the same Scripture, has to except Him who put all things under Christ; and Eph. 1, where it is also cited, virtually excepts the Church, because it is the body of Christ, and therefore one with Him who is thus Head over all things. Personally He is now in this place of exaltation; "but now we see *not yet* all things put under him." This will be precisely in the millennium, and neither in strictness before it nor after it; for in the millennium there will be the *display* of His exaltation, and this over "all things," whether earthly or heavenly, as the psalm is thus comprehensively interpreted by the Holy Ghost in the later inspired writings which make use of it. The reason why there is a pause between Christ's invisible exaltation to the right hand of power, (where He has this place of headship,) and the sight of all things put under Him, is because, while He is thus on high, God is calling out those who shall be joint-heirs, yea, His bride, even as now they are His body. When God's calling of the heavenly saints is complete, Jesus will come, and in due time, when He is manifested, we too shall be manifested with Him in glory (Col. 3) — a passage which itself supposes men on earth, before whom the manifestation of Christ and the Church takes place. This, too, is millennial, and possible neither in the present age nor in eternity. It is the day when Christ is not only the true Melchizedek in *order*, as now, but when He will *exercise* its peculiar functions and fulfil the type of him who brought forth bread and wine for the conquerors, as the priest of the most high God; when it will not be only sacrifice and intercession within the veil, but the blessing of Him who will bless His people on the part of the most high God, then indeed "possessor of heaven and earth," and will bless the most high God on the part of His people, whose enemies will have been delivered into their hands.

"As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the consummation of this age. The Son of man shall send his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all offences, and those that do lawlessness, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine out as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." (Matt. 13: 40-43) When this age is completed, the millennium, not eternity, begins; and as there is a higher and heavenly sphere wherein the risen saints shine as the sun, so is there a lower and earthly one where judgments are executed by angels who serve the Son of man. Such is the kingdom in both its parts, as the millennial age is clearly the only period in which the power and the glory of Christ are thus variously displayed. The Lord give us understanding in all things.